



MyPlate snack tips for parents

Snacks can help children get the nutrients needed to grow. Prepare snacks that include two or more food groups. For younger children, help them get just enough to satisfy their hunger. Let older kids make their own snacks by keeping healthy foods in the kitchen. Visit ChooseMyPlate.gov to help you and your kids select a satisfying snack.

1 Save time by slicing veggies
Store sliced vegetables in the refrigerator and serve with hummus. Top half of a whole-wheat English muffin with spaghetti sauce, chopped vegetables, and low-fat shredded mozzarella and melt in the microwave.

2 Mix it up
For older school-age kids, mix dried fruit, unsalted nuts, and popcorn in a snack-size bag for a quick trail mix. Put fat-free yogurt, 100% fruit juice, and frozen peaches in a blender to make a tasty smoothie.



3 Grab a glass of milk
A cup of low-fat milk or fortified soy beverage is an easy way to drink a healthy snack.

4 Go for great whole grains
Offer whole-wheat breads, popcorn, and whole-oat cereals that are high in fiber and low in added sugars, saturated fat, and sodium. Limit refined-grain products such as snack bars, cakes, and sweetened cereals.



5 Snack on protein foods
Choose protein foods such as unsalted nuts and seeds, hummus or other bean dips, and hard-cooked (boiled) eggs for a healthy, easy snack. Store hard-cooked eggs in the refrigerator for up to 1 week for kids to enjoy any time.

6 Keep an eye on the size
Snacks shouldn't replace a meal, so look for ways to help your kids understand how much is enough. Store snack-size bags in the cupboard and use them to control serving sizes.

7 Fruits are quick and easy
Fresh, frozen, dried, or canned fruits, such as applesauce, frozen grapes, or raisins, can be easy "grab-and-go" options that need little preparation. Offer whole fruit and limit the amount of 100% juice served. Choose canned fruits that are lowest in added sugars.



8 Consider convenience
A single-serving container of low-fat yogurt or individually wrapped string cheese can be just enough for an afterschool snack.



9 Swap out the sugar
Keep healthier foods handy so kids avoid cookies, pastries, or candies between meals. Add seltzer water to a ½ cup of 100% fruit juice instead of offering soda.

10 Prepare homemade goodies
For homemade sweets, add dried fruits like apricots or raisins and reduce the amount of sugar in the recipe. Adjust recipes that include fats like butter or shortening by using unsweetened applesauce or prune puree for half the amount of fat.